

## In the fold of *madness*

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The man that screams in pain or that tells us that he is suffering does not choose  
the mouth that says it.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, Blue and Brown Books

Between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, in various regions of France, some particular theatrical performances called **Fools Theatre**: the *sotties*, took place.

After the catastrophe that occurred in Europe after the Hundred Years' War and the Great Plague, the *sotties* constituted a necessary device so the madness could deliver its message of the end of the world.

To the cry uttered by the character in charge of playing the role of the **Foolish Mother or Crazy**, the other actors -lacking an identity, having only a number to identify them- threw themselves into all kinds of pirouettes and clownish gestures attired in green and yellow clothes and a hat with tips representing invulnerability.

The plot of the play mimicked a **Trial**, centering on a character that was varying: sometimes he was the King or the Pope, sometimes a general or a nobleman, dressed according to his dignity; he was surrounded by the other actors, and also he was subject to their accusations.

In the play, one of the actors was **Someone** who thought under his breath what the others shouted and pointed at their contortions, as a moral defect of the cornered.

The studies developed around the *sotties* highlight the high literary and symbolic level that the accusations achieved.

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The truth is that at some point in the play, the accused was brought to center stage and forced to get naked; he had under the pompous costumes of the represented character, the same green and yellow suit that the others crazy wore.

Some kings as Louis XII encouraged the works so as to find out the secrets of the court that were spread during the work but, in other cases, the actors had an unfortunate fate.

Francoise Davoine stressed that in addition to the therapeutic effect that these works could have, while exorcising the evils of its time, it becomes possible to emphasize the appearance of the **Master's** nakedness, a process which will be described as essential to the **psychotic transference**.

The fact that *Someone* passed a mirror in the audience so as to "another Someone" could be reflected, demonstrated the social role that the *Fools Theatre* had at the time.

The *sotties* expressed literarily what was owed to madness as a manifestation of an important oral tradition.

The wandering madman, inhabitant of the wonderful spaces of the forest, was the subject of a major consideration and a passionate attention.

In that sense, madness lent itself to the dimension of the word and the countless **language games**, which he compelled the others to do, transforming who was **out of sense** in a kind of sage.

However, on the other hand, in the most eminent tradition of humoral medicine, madness has been **objectified**.

The interest in what happens inside the skull as shown by the famous painting of the Bosco: *The Stone of Madness*, or the lobotomies of the twentieth century, or the most recent diagnostic imaging, have underlined a positivist view, which find in the development of neurosciences its most complete expression.

The madmen heirs of the rich oral tradition carried non official knowledges: they were the **buffoons** that Isidore of Seville named *historiones*, who from the outside of the sense questioned the constituted historical speeches.

*It is the madness that speaks and I do not know anyone who knows me better than I*, this is how the *In Praise of Folly* of Erasmus begins.

It is a cognitional attribute and it is resistant to any form of objectification, also to that of the stone of madness or its more modern versions.

The problem we found is that madness volunteers to objectification, and it constitutes itself in it as a particularly suitable object for a positivist science.

Conversely, through the attempt to restore it to subjectivity, we can ask with Francoise Davoine<sup>1</sup>: From where the madman demand us to answer?: *From where precisely, he answers, where there is no other to respond. Speaking to the walls, to the television, madness poses in his interlocutor the challenge of **finding the place of otherness** to which it can speak.*

Instead, the objective proposal turns the madman's treatment into the object of a prolonged global attention focused on pharmacology.

Compensated of his destabilization, judged dangerous to his integrity and that of the others, he is then reinserted through pedagogical and re-educational activities.

This is typical of who through his destabilization bursts into an outbreak, or in child services where positions appear that take under their wing the conditioning for a pathology to take place.

*This treatment approach depends on certain scientist conception of knowledge that seems to promise the technology solution, more or less in the long term, to the most basic human problems.*<sup>2</sup>

This approach rests on an epistemology: the one that assumes that madness is a deficit, basically of biochemical origin.

An entire hospital system can rest on this premise of mitigating the crisis and re-educating: the psychotic is in the crosshairs of a benevolence that makes of the Other's watchfulness its reason for being, and for the best reasons in the world, for its **own sake**.

It is simply paradoxical: the psychotic subject is again in the position of being subject to scientific observation, when in his own delirium he complains about the persecution of the Other.

By this *objective* way, the treatment helps maintaining what it has the function of eliminating the *delirium stabilizing it, and the feeling of being reduced to a state of object (of persecution, control, watchfulness or seizure of organs, etc.)*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Davoine, Francoise. *Historia y trauma. La locura de las guerras*. F.C.E. Buenos Aires. 2011. page 51.

<sup>2</sup> Apollon, Willy. *Tratamiento posible de la psicosis*. In *Tratar la psicosis*. Polemos. Bs. As. 1997. P. 59.

<sup>3</sup> Apollon, Willy. Op. cit. P. 60.

It is necessary to make some clarifications. To think from psychoanalysis supposes that the subject is the one who takes charge of his own healing; Freud doubted that the psychotic could be at the height of this ethical requirement.

At this stage of development of psychoanalysis is a known fact that the failure of the **paternal metaphor**, the **symbolic foreclosure** of the Name of the Father, as it is said, has structural consequences, naming the subject that carries its effects as psychotic.

The effect on the **imaginary** of this metaphorical operation when it occurs is the promotion of the phallic signifier with which we signify the being, the existence.

There can be no doubt that existence is problematic: neurotics often consider its meaning.

*Who are we?, what do we want?, what exists and what not?,* are common questions for which one may resort to the subconscious metaphorical chain that the paternal function ensures.

What happens in psychosis when the existence's signifier is missing?

The usual statement indicating that the excluded from the symbolic returns in the real means that where they should be the questions about the existence, the **answers without the questions** are imposed: they are verbal hallucinations.

We are used to stumble at the clinical work with children and adolescents -in families located in what we anticipated as a psychotic position, or in young people ruined by stupor or panic attacks- with perplexing situations.

Perplexity, phenomenologically prior to the voices is the feeling of the imminence of an answer, as Colette Soler says.<sup>4</sup>

It is a way of certainty, the certainty of a sense, except we ignore which it is, i.e. it is enigmatic.

Moreover, Colette Soler also notes that despite a repeated assertion, the psychosis, as well as the neurosis, they are both under the effect of **castration**.

The occurrence of death and finitude in the speaking being are the result of the transformation that language introduces into the instinctual life of the individual.

There is a loss -castration- by the fact of speaking, a loss at level of life, which is the desire process.

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<sup>4</sup> Soler, Colette. *¿Qué se espera del psicoanálisis y del psicoanalista?* Letra Viva. Bs. As. 2009. On page 179 et seq.

*Speaking of language we will say that from the operation of the language results a real abduction under the symbolic and a fragmentation. The instinct disappears, the drives in plural remain.*<sup>5</sup>

This allows us to say that we cannot ignore the paranoid's desire and even the schizophrenic's one.

Therefore, there is always castration. The lack of the signifier of the Name of the Father is not cause of lack of castration, but the absence of a solution for it.

In neurosis the use of the subconscious metaphorical chain which the function of the father ensures, allows a kind of arrangement with the dimension of castration.

The return into the real of what was symbolically excluded allows appear a gross real, which shows up when there are objects of a very specific enjoyment: the marriage, an employment promotion, the call up, the labor...

It is in those cases, when the symbolic apparatus, that covers or commands, hesitates, that what is hard to bear with the escape, common in the neurosis, moves.

In that sense the repression that constitutes the subconscious itself is a kind of escape: *it is escaping from reality forcing the signifier.*<sup>6</sup>

In some sense, in all human beings, the appearance of the object of enjoyment staggers the signifying chain, or to put it other words, *it makes the lack lacking.*

The issue of the paternal metaphor resource and the availability of the subconscious chain is in the neurosis a mode that the subject has to be less exposed to this irruption of enjoyment.

The lack of organized symbolic scaffolding does not prevent some psychotic to mobilize imaginary and symbolic resources, to subdue the subject to a kind of metonymy, organizing, for example, a delirium.

In other cases the real is treated by the real, becoming passages to the act, even as suicide or homicide at the expense of the subject.

In many teens it is frequent to find what the old psychiatrists called nuclear obsessions: an ascetic withdrawal from the world in a kind of petrification that gives the image of a pseudo obsessive neurosis. It is a push to catatonia.

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<sup>5</sup> Soler, *Colette*. Op. cit. page 183.

<sup>6</sup> Soler, *Colette*. Op. cit. page 185.

I leave for the end the creative solution. Of course, if there is no screen of the Other in front of the real that bursts, this may encourage the creation.

The foreclosure hole that makes repressed signifiers not available makes other signifiers, and other objects to be invented.

It is obvious that the processing by the word, more or less delirious, which defines psychoanalysis, can be considered as a means of curbing the passages to the act.

The complicated issue is to consider the scope of the analytic act in a structure that does not repeat, does not transfer from a subconscious benefited by the effects of repression.

In the *Philosophical Investigations*, Ludwig Wittgenstein argued that when the tool named N. breaks is still possible to show the pieces and to imagine a convention that would lead to the broken name, in the language game, even when the tool no longer exists, even when the name no longer makes sense, even when the wearer has ceased to exist.

What is the language game we play with the madman? We talked about the irruption of enjoyment.

The Real for Lacan, is what has neither name nor image, and always returns to the same place outside of symbolization, which does not stop of not being written, the **impossible**.

It bursts there where the oppositions does not function anymore, those that structure our common reality, the inside and the outside, the before and the after, there where are evaded the guarantees that establish the social bond.

Some years ago, when members of the Center for Psychopathology of Quebec visited us, the visitors reminded that **psychosis is not the loss of reality, but the loss of social bonds**.

That breakthrough that makes impossible any otherness, that of whom we compete or we identify ourselves with; or that of the Other who founds the alliance, which is proposed as the destruction of the guarantees of the word, is a challenge for the analyst: how to build another so as to speak?

It is interesting for analysts a Deleuze's observation: nobody raves with mom and dad. One raves with the Martians, with the police, with the Nazis, with the authorities, etc.

In this sense it is possible to note that the dimension that the Saxons authors have distinguished with the name of **self** and that articulates the social with the individual has exploded in psychosis.

In 1945 Lacan published a text called *British Psychiatry and the War*, and he reviled the systematic **disregard** that the French did of what he calls truly terrifying dissolution of the moral status that the war had caused, he predicts regretfully, the terrible fate that disregard will lead to future generations.

The tool of the names breakage we cited in Wittgenstein is a breakdown of the potential for transmission.

That is why Françoise Davoine bases its assessment of psychosis in the description *about how pieces of history till the time of the outbreak of delirium, cut short of transmission, they emerge in daylight, in extravagant or minimalist ways, but always shocking till finding the analyst, a responsible reporter for the annals of a silenced feat.*<sup>7</sup>

This is about what is mentioned in the displayed scenes of the *sotties*, developed until one is reflected in the mirror reflection that Someone exhibits, so as to he become somebody, always with the fall of the Master who has officially written the *Great Story*.

Of course History, the *Great History*, does not get back these *stories* that account for his failure.

The European continent has been the privileged field of great conflagrations that made their citizens explode and their descendants to go mad.

Lacan himself points out the suicides in third generation of descendants of the protagonists of the Holocaust, whether they are the deported or the hierarchs.

We do not have a serious investigation of subjective conflicts caused by state terrorism, the disappearances and the dictatorships, except the one known worldwide and noted as the duty of memory, without this meaning too much, except the alleged glorification of opportunists.

Forced immigrations, the culture clashes, the fiercest adaptations, the accommodations in shantytowns, are other many occasions for breaking the names tool, and that abounds in our services.

In 1963 Winnicott published *Fear of Breakdown*, breakdown that we could consider as a variant of perplexity.

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<sup>7</sup> Davoine, Françoise. Op. cit. page 78.

It is not in harmony with the repressed subconscious, he says. Neither with the Jungian subconscious, but with the one that is in harmony *with an ego integration, unable to include something.*<sup>8</sup>

It is possible, Winnicott says, that the breakdown has already happened, and he adds: *The patient needs to "remember" it, but it is no possible to remember something that has not happened yet, and this thing of the past has not still happened because the patient was not there so as to happen.*<sup>9</sup>

Psychotic transference is a mode to exist in areas of nonexistence: not all pain can be told through the mouth of the sufferer, we commented in the epigraph.

Some time ago we collaborate in the Day Hospital of Tobar García Hospital. The incessant attendance of children and families severely damaged evokes its origin in a place like the taboo place that the villager indicates to *Oedipus in Oedipus at Colonus.*

This space does not allow *any gaze, any voice, and any word.*

Nothing is scarier than this sacred forest of the tragedy and further wherein *Oedipus disappears.*

The corridors that receive the inhabitants of nothingness are more important than the bureaucratic machinery.

The voices and the looks are getting ready to a welcome that makes explode the official receptions or the histories transformed into criminal records.

It seems that they deal with that what a passerby also tells Oedipus: they deal *with things, foreigner, that have not had the honor of being included in the history, but that one has learned to frequent.*

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<sup>8</sup> Winnicott, Donald. *El miedo al derrumbe.* In *Exploraciones psicoanalíticas I.* Paidós. Buenos Aires. 2015. page 116.

<sup>9</sup> Winnicott, Donald. Op. cit. page 117.